

## **21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers Frequently Asked Questions**

### **GENERAL INFORMATION**

***Where can I find information about the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers (21<sup>st</sup> CCLC) grants? How can I get a copy of the application?***

Michigan information, including the application, is available on the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) website at [www.michigan.gov/mde](http://www.michigan.gov/mde). Click on “Keywords” to the left of the search, and a drop-down menu will include a link directly to the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC information. Federal information is available at <http://www.ed.gov/programs/21stcclc/index.html>.

***What is a 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC?***

The focus of the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC program, re-authorized under Title IV, Part B, of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001, is to provide expanded academic enrichment opportunities for children attending low-performing schools. Tutorial services and academic enrichment activities are designed to help students meet local and state standards in core academic subjects with particular emphasis on reading and mathematics. In addition, 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC programs provide youth development activities, drug and violence prevention programs, technology education programs, art, music and recreation programs, counseling and character education to enhance the academic component of the program. Also, services such as family literacy may be provided to families of students enrolled in the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC.

***How long will the programs operate?***

Funding of the programs beyond the first year is contingent on the availability of funds. MDE currently plans for continuation of level funding for up to four more years. First year budget forms are included in the application packet.

### **SERVICE POPULATION**

***Which children/students can be served by the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC?***

Each applicant will identify the school(s) intended for service at each proposed 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC site. All students who attend those schools are eligible to attend the program. However, each school building proposed for service must have at least 30 percent of the students from low-income families for the school to be eligible for service. Low-income families are defined as those whose children qualify for free or reduced price meals. Applicants must provide equitable services to private school students, and their families, if those students are part of the target population defined in the application.

***Where can I find information on the percentages of students who qualify for free or reduced price meals?***

Go to [http://www.michigan.gov/mde/1,1607,7-140-6525\\_6530\\_6569---,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/mde/1,1607,7-140-6525_6530_6569---,00.html).

Look under Resources and Related Information (at the bottom of the page), and click on “Breakfast & Lunch Info by District – Oct 2003.”

***Please explain the requirements for participation of private school children more fully.***

Section 9501 of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001 statute, which also applies to the 21st CCLC program, defines the participation of private school children. This section deals with the requirement for equitable participation of private school children in federal elementary and secondary programs. In brief, public or private school students are eligible to participate in 21st CCLC programs on an equitable basis. A public school or other public or private organization that is awarded a grant must provide equitable services to private school students and their families. In designing a program that meets this requirement, grantees must provide comparable opportunities for the participation of both public and private school students in the areas served by the grant. In other words, any child who either lives in or attends school in an area served by a 21st CCLC grant is eligible to participate in the program on an equitable basis, regardless of where the program is housed or who manages the grant. Furthermore, if a public school or district is applying, they must consult with private school officials during the design and the development of the 21st CCLC program on issues such as how the children's needs will be identified and what services will be offered. Services and benefits provided must be secular, neutral, and non-ideological. Assurance that applicants will provide these services to private school children is found in the application packet on page 1a.

***Can students in all grades participate?***

The applicant may propose service to students in any grade. There are priority points for applications that propose to serve middle school students. A middle school is defined as any school that serves students in grades 6, 7, and/or 8, except a K-6 building or an 8-12 building.

***What about preschool children?***

The federal guidance indicates that “students” are the intended beneficiaries of the program; however, the U.S. Department of Education believes that younger children who will become students in the schools being served can also participate in program activities designed to get them ready to succeed in school. While some 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC funds might be used for programs that include preschoolers, an entire program may not be directed to preschoolers because the intent of the legislation is to focus on the school-age population and their families. For example, preschoolers who attend a program in an eligible school might attend the after-school portion of the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC program. However, a private child care center would not be awarded funds to serve preschoolers and kindergartners who are served in that setting. In the same way, an applicant school district could not be awarded funds only to provide full-day services to Michigan School Readiness Program and kindergarten students who attend ½ day funded programs. However, if the district proposes to serve those students and to provide them with after school services along with students in older grades, that would be acceptable.

***Can 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC services be provided to adults?***

Yes. Adult family members of students participating in the 21st CCLC may participate in educational services and/or activities appropriate for adults, such as family literacy and services to help parents support their children’s academic achievement and to support parents’ involvement in their children’s education.

## **ELIGIBLE AND PRIORITY APPLICANTS**

### ***Who can apply?***

Local education agencies (LEAs), including local school districts, intermediate school districts, and public school academies are eligible, as well as community-based and faith-based organizations. Faith-based organizations may not discriminate against beneficiaries on the basis of religion. Funds can be used solely for the purposes of this program. Funds may not be used to support religious practices, such as religious instruction, worship, or prayer.

### ***Can current grantees apply?***

Current grantees can apply to expand to different groups of students in additional schools or to enhance services (e.g., a program that currently runs only after school might propose expansion to full summer services). Grantees that have received federal 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC awards that have ended may apply for funds to continue their programs, but the new funds must be used in a manner consistent with all the requirements of the new statute.

### ***Can a grantee or partnership submit more than one application?***

Yes. A grantee or partnership may submit multiple applications, as long as there is no duplication of service proposed. In an urban area or collaborative arrangement, for example, one application might be developed to serve five sites on the east side of the city or county and another application to serve three sites on the west side.

### ***Are there priorities for some groups?***

Yes. Eligibility to apply is determined by a minimum low-income rate (free or reduced lunch, 185 percent of poverty) of 30 percent of the students in each school being served, with more points given for areas with 40 percent low income. Additional priority points will be awarded to areas with a 50 percent or higher census poverty rate. In addition, priority is given for service to students in low-performing schools and students in the middle school years. Low-performing schools are those that did not achieve annual yearly progress (AYP) due to student proficiency and/or those receiving “D-alert” or unaccredited *Education YES!* grades. Districts with no grade should submit current MEAP data for the schools they intend to serve. A final priority is for any application that is a formal partnership (consortium) of a local education agency (local or intermediate school district or public school academy) that receives Title I funds and a community-based organization that proposes service to Title I buildings in school improvement status. MDE has developed a computer program that will automatically access the data and calculate the priority points for all applicants.

### ***Older students often don’t sign up for subsidized meals even though their families are low income. Won’t this penalize middle and high schools?***

Instead of using the percentages of the middle or high school directly, an application may indicate that the weighted averages of the feeder elementary schools are used. If an applicant wishes to use this procedure to verify eligibility or priority for funding, the applicant must explain how the calculation was made in the “need” section of the grant application, and on a single cover sheet attached to the original copy of the application.

## **COMMUNITY COLLABORATION**

***Collaboration with the community is required. What does it mean when the instructions indicate that Multi-Purpose Collaborative Body (MPCB) support or endorsement is sufficient?***

The MPCB is an inclusive planning and implementation body of stakeholders at the county or multi-county level. An MPCB serves every county in Michigan and is made up of public and private agency directors, including minimally the intermediate school district, Family Independence Agency, and Department of Community Health. The MPCB articulates a shared vision and mission to improve outcomes for children and families, and recognizes that improved outcomes for children and families are the responsibility of all of the human services agencies and the entire community. The MPCB takes responsibility for local direction and coordination of state-, federal-, and foundation-sponsored collaborative enterprises. The MPCB facilitates the development of comprehensive cross-systems arrangements through which agencies and the community working together can better meet the needs of children and families. Because the MPCB includes so many agencies, a letter of support or collaboration form from the MPCB is considered to be support from the entire community, including all the represented agencies.

***Why do community-based and faith-based agencies have to collaborate with the schools?***

The 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC program is Title IV, Part B of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001. The intent and focus of the entire act is to improve student achievement in low income and low-performing schools. Although this new legislation allows community-based and faith-based organizations to apply to be the lead and fiscal agents for their projects, it will not be possible to reach the overarching goal of improvement in student achievement if the out-of-school time program does not also interact with teachers and the school administration in the schools the students attend.

## **OPERATIONS**

***How many sites may a grantee operate?***

Each application is limited to five sites.

***How many hours must a 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC operate?***

Data from the federal grants indicate that there is a minimum participation level before the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC is effective. Therefore, Michigan has determined that programs must operate a minimum of three hours each day, four school days per week, during the school year. Of course, additional services may be proposed as indicated in the needs portion of the application. A 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC may operate during any non-school hours or periods when school is not in session, including before school, after school, evenings, weekends, and during the summer, on staff development days and vacation periods.

***Must programs take place in school buildings?***

No. However, the federal legislation indicates that non-school facilities must be at least as available and as accessible to students as the school building. This requires that students be transported or escorted to off-campus locations. The applicant must address how students will travel safely to and from the community learning center and home.

### ***Why must programs be licensed, and how do I take care of that?***

Public Act 116 of 1973 requires that comprehensive programs like the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC programs be licensed as child care centers. A state agency, such as the Michigan Department of Education, cannot legally forward funds to a program that is not in compliance with state law.

Documentation is required as a part of your application to certify that you are in compliance with Michigan child care licensing requirements. Programs in public schools that have been licensed for four years may qualify for an exemption. In that case, documentation of the exemption may substitute for licensing documentation in the application. For more information on licensing and exemptions go to [http://www.michigan.gov/fia/0,1607,7-124-5455\\_27716\\_27718---,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/fia/0,1607,7-124-5455_27716_27718---,00.html) or call the Family Independence Agency (FIA), Office of Child and Adult Licensing, at 1-866-685-0006.

### ***Is transportation required?***

Each applicant must assess the needs of the community. In some communities, students will not be able to stay after school for the program unless they have a way to get home at the end of the program. In other communities, parents may be able to pick up their children at the end of the day.

## **FINANCIAL ISSUES**

### ***Are there limits on funding?***

There is a minimum of \$50,000 per year for each year for each grant. There is no maximum, because numbers of students and the extent of services provided may vary. A general rule of thumb is that it costs about \$120,000 per year for an after school only program for one elementary school and about \$170,000 if the program runs through the summer. Additional services, including before school, weekends, and later evenings will require additional resources.

### ***Is there a match requirement?***

No. However, each program must develop a plan for sustainability after the period of federal funding. Tuition and tuition subsidy through the Family Independence Agency's Child Development and Care unit are common funding sources. For more information on tuition subsidy go to <http://www.michigan.gov/fia>. Funding for snacks and meals is available through the School Meals unit of the Michigan Department of Education. For more information on school meals go to [http://www.michigan.gov/mde/0,1607,7-140-6530\\_6569-19560--,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/mde/0,1607,7-140-6530_6569-19560--,00.html). For more information on funding go to [http://www.michigan.gov/mde/0%2C1607%2C7-140-5235\\_6093\\_6101-21321--%2C00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/mde/0%2C1607%2C7-140-5235_6093_6101-21321--%2C00.html) to access the Michigan Public School Accounting Manual.

## **EVALUATION**

### ***How will programs be evaluated?***

Each program must propose a local evaluation that takes into consideration all aspects of the program's function, but particularly its effectiveness in implementing a high-quality experience for students that improves their development and academic achievement. Each applicant must assure participation in a statewide evaluation and agrees to collect data and cooperate fully with the state evaluators at Michigan State University. Finally, applicants will be required to provide

information to the U.S. Department of Education. Programs should expect on-site visits from Michigan Department of Education consultants approximately twice during the funding period.

## **GRANT SUBMISSION AND TIMELINE**

### ***When is the application due?***

The application is due by 5 p.m. on May 4, 2004. Delivery instructions are included in the application packet. We regret that applications **cannot** be hand-delivered because of security measures at the John A. Hannah Building.

### ***When will awards be announced?***

Notification of awards will be mailed when the State Superintendent of Public Instruction approves them.

### ***Will there be another application period?***

Not at this time. Additional funding will depend on federal funding of the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC Program in NCLB.

### ***I can't attend any of the technical assistance sessions. How can I get the information?***

The application and all instructions are available on the MDE website at [www.michigan.gov/mde](http://www.michigan.gov/mde). Click on "Keywords" to the left of the search, and a drop-down menu will include a link directly to the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC information. The PowerPoint presentation from the technical assistance sessions will also be posted on the Department website.

## **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

### ***Where can I find other resources?***

The following websites may be of interest:

[www.afterschoolalliance.org](http://www.afterschoolalliance.org)  
[www.connectforkids.org](http://www.connectforkids.org)  
[www.mott.org](http://www.mott.org)  
[www.thegateway.org](http://www.thegateway.org)  
[www.financeproject.org](http://www.financeproject.org)  
[www.after-school.gov](http://www.after-school.gov)  
[www.gse.harvard.edu/hfrp/projects/afterschool/about.html](http://www.gse.harvard.edu/hfrp/projects/afterschool/about.html)  
[www.mcrel.org/programs/21stcentury/index.asp](http://www.mcrel.org/programs/21stcentury/index.asp)  
[www.nccenet.org/](http://www.nccenet.org/)  
[www.ncea.com/](http://www.ncea.com/)  
[www.wellesley.edu/WCW/CRW/SAC/](http://www.wellesley.edu/WCW/CRW/SAC/)  
[www.nga.org](http://www.nga.org)  
[www.nncc.org](http://www.nncc.org)  
[www.nsaca.org](http://www.nsaca.org)  
[www.ncrel.org/after/](http://www.ncrel.org/after/)  
[www.ed.gov/21stcclc/](http://www.ed.gov/21stcclc/)